



The President
Palikir, Pohnpei
Federated States of Micronesia

May 20, 2022

T.H. Lemanu Peleti Mauga
Governor
American Samoa

T.H. Mark Brown
Prime Minister
Cook Islands

H.E. Winfred Edouard Tereori Fritch
President
French Polynesia

T.H. David Yutaka Ige
Governor
U.S. State of Hawai'i

H.E. Lionel Rouwen Aingimea
President
Republic of Nauru

T.H. Jacinda Ardern
Prime Minister
New Zealand

T.H. Ralph DLG Torres
Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

T.H. James Marape
Prime Minister
Independent State of Papua New Guinea

T.H. Afioga Fiaame Naomi Mata'afa
Prime Minister
Independent State of Samoa

T.H. Scott John Morrison
Prime Minister
Australia

T.H. Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama
Prime Minister
Republic of Fiji

T.H. Lourdes Aflague Leon Guerrero
Governor
U.S. Territory of Guam (Guahan)

H.E. Taneti Maamau
President
Republic of Kiribati

H.E. Louis Mapou
President
New Caledonia

T.H. Dalton Emani Tagelagi
Premier
Niue

H.E. Surangel S. Whipps Jr.
President
Republic of Palau

H.E. David Kabua
President
Republic of the Marshall Islands

T.H. Manasseh Damukana Sogavare
Prime Minister
Solomon Islands



T.H. Siaosi 'Ofakivahafolau Sovaleni
Prime Minister
Kingdom of Tonga

T.H. Kausea Natano
Prime Minister
Republic of Tuvalu

T.H. Bob Loughman Weibur
Prime Minister
Republic of Vanuatu

T.H. Henry Tuakeu Puna
Secretary-General
Pacific Islands Forum

My dear Pacific Brothers & Sisters,

I bring you warmest greetings from the Paradise in Our Backyards, the Federated States of Micronesia. At the outset, I wish to emphasize my deepest respect to you, your office, and to your Government and People. The People and Government of the Federated States of Micronesia collectively wish for your People's good health and prosperity, and extends to you all that which we seek: peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity.

My dear Pacific Brothers & Sisters, I am writing to you today—the Head of Government of each member of the Pacific Islands Forum, the Micronesian Presidents Summit, and the Pacific Island Conference of Leaders—as there is a topic of truly regional importance I wish to bring to your attention. I respectfully and humbly solicit your kind attention to what I wish to share with you, which I believe is the single-most game-changing proposed agreement in the Pacific in any of our lifetimes.

Before continuing further, I should begin by confirming why I feel obligated to write to you all on this topic and in this manner. The foreign policy of the Federated States of Micronesia is to be a friend to all, and an enemy to none. We believe that Climate Change represents the single-most existential security risk to our islands, and that geopolitics at large threaten to take away the focus from the greatest challenge of our times. Additionally, my country is the only sovereign Pacific Island Country in the world that has both a Great Friendship with the People's Republic of China as well as an Enduring Partnership, demonstrated by our Compact of Free Association, with the United States of America. We have ceaselessly advocated for joint China-U.S. cooperation on tackling Climate Change; and we have ceaselessly advocated for joint China-U.S. promotion of peace and harmony in our Blue Pacific Continent. My country's unique context, I believe, compels me to speak. Where yesterday I condemned the former U.S. President for his January 6th, 2021, insurrection effort, today I feel obligated to warn you all of what I foresee coming from China tomorrow.

On or around April 12th, 2022, I was informed by our Department of Foreign Affairs of a forthcoming meeting to be held on May 30th, 2022, between the People's Republic of China and the ten Pacific Island Countries it has diplomatic relations with, formally titled the 2nd PRC-PICS



Foreign Ministers Meeting. It is noteworthy that, for many Pacific Island Countries, the Foreign Minister is also the Prime Minister. It is also noteworthy that the meeting would conclude with the Foreign Minister of China, the Honorable Wang Yi, visiting each country that has diplomatic relations with China. The meeting, to be jointly hosted by the Republic of Fiji, would conclude with the adoption of two documents, which I have appended to my letter for the benefit of Pacific Islands who do not have diplomatic relations with China, such as the Republic of Tuvalu and others.

One of these documents, the China-Pacific Island Countries Common Development Vision, essentially amounts to a pre-written and pre-determined Joint Communiqué or outcomes document of the meeting, and the other is a five-year plan for implementing the outcomes into action.

The language of these documents is a sign that China has faithfully done its homework, as the choice of words are, on their face and at first glance, attractive to many of us—perhaps all of us. They speak of democracy and equity and freedom and justice, and compare and contrast these ideas with concepts that we, as Pacific Islands, would want to align ourselves with, such as sustainable development, tackling Climate Change, and economic growth. Where the problems arise are in the details, and the details suggest that China is seeking to do exactly what I warned of in my September 2020 address at the United Nations General Assembly: to acquire access and control of our region, with the result being the fracturing of regional peace, security, and stability, all while in the name of accomplishing precisely that task.

Brothers and Sisters,

If you have not already, it is worth reviewing the attached documents before reading the rest of my letter. Presuming that you are familiar with their contents, I shall summarize some of them.

The China-Pacific Island Countries Common Development Vision seeks to fundamentally alter what used to be bilateral relations with China into multilateral relations, which it accomplishes by referring to all of the Pacific countries with diplomatic relations with China as “one side” while, in the same breath, describing how every country is equal, regardless of size.

The Common Development Vision then seeks to ensure Chinese control of “traditional and non-traditional security” of our islands, including through law enforcement training, supplying, and joint enforcement efforts, which can be used for the protection of Chinese assets and citizens. It suggests “cooperation on network governance and cybersecurity” and “equal emphasis on development and security,” and that there shall be “economic development and protection of national security and public interests.”



The Common Development Vision seeks to ensure Chinese influence in Government through “collaborative” policy planning and political exchanges, including diplomatic training, in addition to an increase in Chinese media relationships in the Pacific, and the construction of Confucius Institutes. It describes Chinese-influenced policies and legislation with the explicit intention to align the Belt & Road Initiative (a Chinese strategy) with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent (a Pacific strategy).

The Common Development Vision seeks Chinese control and ownership of our communications infrastructure, as well as customs and quarantine infrastructure (hence the terms “smart customs” and “smart quarantine” in the text), for the purpose of biodata collection and mass surveillance of those residing in, entering, and leaving our islands, ostensibly to occur in part through cybersecurity partnership.

The Common Development Vision seeks Chinese economic control of our collective fisheries and extractive resource sectors, including through free trade agreements, marine spatial planning, deep-sea mining, and extensive public and private sector loan-taking through the Belt & Road Initiative via the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The Common Development Vision explicitly seeks to undermine the international rules-based order by developing a “new form of international relations featuring mutual respect, equity, justice, and win-win cooperation,” and China seeks to do this vis-à-vis “upholding multilateralism and the purposes and principles of the UN Charter” to its benefit.

While some elements of the Common Development Vision are not necessarily malign in intent, concerns become heightened with the right information. As an example, China correctly describes upholding the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as the “primary channel for [Climate] negotiations,” and to jointly promote the full and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement. Notably, however, China’s Paris Agreement pledges do not describe when China expects to reach peak CO2 emissions, the level at which their emissions would peak, or how long they would plateau before starting to drop. China has committed to reaching carbon neutrality in 2060, which is beyond the actionable remaining lifetimes of most contemporary adults, including myself and each of us in receipt of this letter, and so a promise whose makers cannot be held to account for if it doesn’t come to pass.

My dear Pacific Brothers & Sisters,

I asked every member of my Cabinet, as well as my Nation’s diplomatic corps, what they thought of China’s proposed agreement—which, though not legally binding, is demonstrative of China’s intention to shift Pacific allegiances in their direction.

My Cabinet recommend to me “serious caution” regarding China developing a marine spatial plan on behalf of the Pacific, and that the “vision for a China-PICS free trade area is